

Lubna Irfan (Editor)

Zainab Naqvi (Joint Editor)

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From the Pen of the General Editor

I am pleased and extremely satisfied that we were able to come out with number 3-4 of Volume 2 of our students' endeavour, The Bulletin of the Sultania Historical Society [BOSHS]. As usual you are able to get this issue due to the hard labour put up in it by the Editor, Ms Lubna Irfan. The Joint Editor, Ms Zainab Naqvi also put in much labour in spite of her busy schedule of classes and semester exams. I must thank all those students and Research Scholars who participated in the weekly seminars of the Sultania Historical Society. This time a number of teacher presentations also took place.

This issue is thoughtfully devoted to a theme which is quite relevant today. In the times of extreme majoritarianism and open communalism, we have decided to focus on Aurangzeb and his policies. Was he as he is being tried to be painted in popular imagination: a religious bigot? Or was he simply an ambitious ruler who had no other option but to use religion as a political tool? Is he as black as BJP wants us to believe or did his personality comprise of many shades: some black, some grey and some more white than grey? Was he a messiah for Muslims and a devil incarnate for Non-Muslims?

In recent years after Sir Jadunath Sarkar and S R Sharma, many works have come out which on the basis of the primary sources try to moderate our understanding of one of the greatest ruler of India. Satish Chandra and M Athar Ali were one of the first who tried to present a more nuanced picture of Aurangzeb. They tried to point out that he did break temples and impose *jizya* but they were all acts inspired by the politics of the age. He also laid before us the fact that under Aurangzeb a large number of Rajputs and Hindus were not only appointed but also promoted to highest positions.

More recently Audrey Truschke and her book has tried to present before us a sanitised Aurangzeb. Through her writings she attempted to present an Aurangzeb who was not a bigot, but just a great king.

In this issue we try to present a few important essays: Satish Chandra's essay on Jizya, M Athar Ali's paper on causes of Rathore Rebellion and an interview which our team had with Audrey Truschke while she was in the Centre to deliver a couple of lectures. The Editor has also been kind enough to include one of my articles on Aurangzeb which was published in the Frontline.

Apart from these papers, essays and interview, this issue also contains reports on the various academic

activities of the CAS Department of History. At the end are the obituaries of some of those whom we lost in the last few months.

In the end I would take the opportunity to inform our students of a few things which we have accomplished in the last few months. Apart from our weekly Seminars and a National Seminar On Business Classes (which we conducted in collaboration with the Aligarh Historians Society), we have crossed some other academic milestones. We have digitised our entire collection of Photographs and Plans related to various explorations and Surveys: photos of sites like Atranjikhera and Fathpur Sikri, indigo vats at Bayana, Jalali and Aligarh; various tanks, water bodies, sarais and other structures have all been scanned and digitised. We would soon make them available online.

We are also going ahead with our publications and we will come out with a book on Medieval Archaeology in near future. I am also quite happy to announce that our Archaeology Section which had been closed since past few years has once again been revived. The building where the Section is now located has been recently renovated, thanks to our Vice Chancellor Professor Tariq Mansoor making available quite liberal grants for building renovation and electrical wirings. Soon we will be setting up a Medieval Archaeology Room in the Section. The new facilities will be inaugurated soon. We are also trying to start certificate and PG diploma courses in Archaeology and enter into academic collaborations with ASI and other such bodies.

In the end I would once again like to thank everyone involved: Professors Jabir Raza, Prof. Mohammad Sajjad and Prof. MK Pundhir, Dr. Ali Kazim, Dr. Enayatullah Khan and Dr Shivangini Tandon as well as others for their constant support and participation. Thank you Zainab and Lubna and thank you all those who made presentations. Thanks are also due to Mr. Moinuddin and his press, National Printers for getting this printed and to Mr. Nadeem Husain for uploading it to our website.

Hope all of you would carry on with your endeavours so that Volume 3 of this Bulletin also becomes a possibility!

(Professor Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi)
Chairman & Coordinator
CAS, Department of History
Aligarh Muslim University



Editor's Comment

This issue of the second volume of Bulletin of Sultania Historical Society can be seen as a humble attempt at reminding the people of what History truly is and how it should be written. In this issue we have reproduced works of two pioneering historians who had been instrumental in establishing the scientific objective approach towards history. Taking Aurangzeb as its primary focus the journal looks at some of the works that detangle him from the singular communal narrative in which he has been conveniently fit. The first article 'Jizyah and the State in India during the 17th Century' is the ground-breaking article of Satish Chandra which contextualises the re-imposition of Jizya, during the reign of Aurangzeb, in its proper political perspective, dealing with and countering the earlier narratives. On similar lines the other article by M. Athar Ali, 'Causes of the Rathor Rebellion of 1679' also re-evaluates the real issues behind the rebellion which has otherwise mostly been interpreted in religious manner. In this paper again the political dynamics associated with the event were brought to the fore. The article by Prof. S.A. Nadeem Rezavi, on the topic, 'Revisiting Aurangzeb and his Attitude towards Non-Muslims' gives a larger overview of Aurangzeb and his policies and their political backgrounds. Apart from the works of the stalwarts of the Mughal History, an interview of Audrey Truschke who has been taking forward the cause of objective history has also been included in this volume. Dr. Truschke visited AMU in August when she was kind enough to give an interview for the Journal. In the interview she answers several questions based on her first two books and their approach, her choice of topics while writing and also provides a hint of what to expect of her new book.

In addition to these, the journal contains detailed reports of the events that took place at the department. The beginning of the semester was marked by the visit of Audrey Truschke who gave two lectures in the month of August. Following this the month of October saw two events where there were celebrations of the birth anniversaries of three great men, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Mahatma Gandhi and Akbar. On the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti speeches were delivered on various aspects of the life and thought of the Mahatma. The birth anniversaries of Sir Syed and Akbar were celebrated with the help of an exhibition and a symposium. And finally towards the end of the semester, a seminar on the Business Class was organized by the Department. Apart from these events, the regular Saturday Seminars were conducted continuously under the Sultania

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Historical Society in which many students and teachers from the department and some invited guests presented their papers.

We also use this opportunity to remember two great Historians who left us in 2018. Prof. Aniruddha Ray and Prof. Mushirul Hasan both are being fondly remembered by the Department of History for their invaluable contribution to the subject of History.

In the end I would like to express my gratitude to those who were responsible for the proper execution of the work of Sultania Historical Society throughout the session and in bringing out this Journal. The General Editor, Prof. S.A. Nadeem Rezavi, whose guidance was the major driving force behind this Journal cannot be thanked enough for his help. I also thank the students who participated in the regular Saturday Seminars, engaged in debates and discussions on the presentations. The work of Zainab Naqvi, who read, re-read, edited and arranged the articles, has been instrumental in bringing about this issue. She was further assisted by many students of Masters. Mention can be made of Mr. Hammad Rizvi, Mr, Areeb Khan, Mr. Basharat Parray and Ms. Layma Parween, all of whom contributed in their own capacities to the journal and various activities of the Sultania Historical Society.

Lubna Irfan Editor

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Jizyah and the State in India During the 17th Century

(Originally published in Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient, 1969)

-Satish Chandra

The re-imposition of jizyah by Aurangzeb in 1679 is generally regarded as a turning point in the history of the Mughal Empire in India, and as marking the culmination of the spirit of religious bigotry which, in turn, led to the alienation of the Rajputs, the Marathas and the Hindus generally, and hastened the disintegration of the Empire. On the other hand, some writers have represented the step as a consequence of the growing spirit of opposition to the Empire among the Hindus, leaving Aurangzeb no option but to appeal to the loyalty of the Muslims by reverting to a more specifically Muslim State. In both cases, discord and hostility between the Hindus and the Muslims and the growth of a spirit of particularism are regarded as the main factors in the reimposition of jizyah. However, in order to understand the measure, it is also necessary to take into account the political and economic developments in the empire, the religious trends at the Court, and, in particular, the controversy regarding the nature of the state which had continued with some changes of form and approach since the establishment of Muslim rule in India.



Figure 1: Equestrian portrait of Aurangzib, Mughal, circa 1660-70, British Library, Johnson Album.

The explanations advanced by a number of contemporary and near contemporary observers for the reimposition of Jizyah by Aurangzeb may be examined first. Muhammad Saqi Musta'id Khan, who wrote on the basis of official papers and may almost be regarded as the official historian of Aurangzeb's reign, says:

'As all the aims of the religious Emperor were directed to the spreading of the law of Islam and the overthrow of the practice of the infidels, he issued orders to the high diwani officers that from Wednesday, the 2nd April, 1679/1st Rabi' I 1090, in obedience to the Qur'anic injunction 'till they pay commutation money (jizyah) with the hand in humility' and in agreement with the canonical traditions, jizyah should be collected from the infidels (zimmis) of the capital and the provinces'.

Isardas (Ishwardas) and 'Ali Muhammad Khan are in broad agreement with Saqi Musta'id khan, but emphasize the role of the ulama in the matter. Isardas, says, '.... the theologians, the learned men and the traditionalists, in view of the regard of the Emperor, the shadow of God, for the (true) faith, represented to him that the levying of jizyah was necessary and compulsory according to shari'a). 'Ali Muhammad Khan says 'Since His Majesty was inclined to promote the faith and to give currency to the laws of the shari'a, rejecting all things contrary to shari'a in the fixing of expenses, and in all matters of state as well as in all revenue and administrative matters, at that auspicious moment, the learned men, the theologians and the saintly persons, in view of his regard for the faith, represented to the Emperor, that the levying of jizyah upon the opponents of the (true) faith was compulsory according to shari'a, and urged him to reimpose it in the provinces of the Empire'.

There statements, which run on parallel lines, may be taken to represent the official point of view. In official pronouncements, emphasis would naturally be placed on the Emperor's regard for the true faith and his deference to the suggestions of the theologians, the learned men, etc. as the reason for the re-imposition of jizyah. But this does not explain why it should have taken Aurangzeb, who was himself well-versed in the shari'a, twenty- two years from his accession to the throne to arrive at the orthodox position regarding jizyah, which was sufficiently clear and which had been repeatedly expounded by the orthodox ulama.

The contemporary European travellers and the agents of trading companies posted in India suggest a somewhat different explanation for the measure. Thomas Roll, the president of the English factory at Surat, wrote in 1679 that jizyah was being collected with great severity with the object not only of replenishing Aurangzeb's exhausted treasury, but also of forcing the poorer sections of the population to become Mohammedans. Manucci, writing about a quarter of a century later, emphasised the same factors, remarking, "The death of Jaswant Singh was used by Aurangzeb as an opening to oppress the Hindus still more, since they had no longer any valiant powerful rajah who could defend them. He imposed upon the Hindus a poll-tax, which everyone was forced to pay, more or less.

Aurangzeb did this for two reasons: first, because by this time his treasuries had begun to shrink owing to expenditure on his campaigns: secondly to force Hindus to become Mohammedans".

The argument that by imposing jizyah, Aurangzeb wanted to force the non-Muslims to accept Islam may have been sincerely believed by many of his contemporaries but is hardly tenable in the light of historical scrutiny. In particular, the Hindus had stubbornly clung to their faith despite the prevalence of Muslim rule in large parts of the country for over four hundred Years. During most of this period, they were required to pay jizyah. Aurangzeb could hardly have been sanguine enough to expect a different result from his reimposition of the jizvah. Though this was a regressive tax, and bore more heavily on the poor than on the rich, there is no proof of any large-scale conversions during his reign on account of this measure. Had any such developments taken place, they would have been recorded with glee by the Emperor's eulogists as a triumph of his policy.

As far as the purely economic motive is concerned, it is true that when Aurangzeb reviewed his finances in the thirteenth year of his reign, he found that expenses had exceeded income during the

preceding twelve years. Consequently, a number of economies were affected, including 'the retrenchment of many items in the expenditure of the Emperor, the princes and the Begums'. It may also be presumed that continuous wars in the Deccan, particularly after 1676, frontier wars in the north-east, intermittent fighting with the Afghan tribesmen, and later the breach with the Rathors and Sishodias none of which secured any large territorial gains or monetary compensation must have strained the royal treasury. During his reign, Aurangzeb issued a number of orders forbidding a large number of customary cesses. Similar orders had been issued by earlier rulers also. We are told that, despite these orders, the revenue department continued to include the income from the forbidden cesses in the jama'dami (valuation) of the jagirs. It was apparently expected that the jagirdars would make these remissions out of their sanctioned income. But only a few nobles, such as Raja Jaswant Singh, offered to do so. Others demanded compensation in lieu of the income they were required to surrender, and since there was not enough money available to pay this, the remission remained a dead letter in the jagirs. Thus, there is little basis for the argument that since Aurangzeb had abolished the cesses not sanctioned by Islam, he was justified in levying the Jizyah one of the taxes specifically sanctioned by Islamic Law.

We do not possess any figures from the reign of Aurangzeb for the yield of Jizyah in the Mughal Empire. According to an eighteenth century writer, Shivdas Lakhnawi, the realisation (hasil) from jizyah in all the provinces of the empire was 40 m. rupees. This figure, although it is given in the context of the (re) abolition of jizyah at the instance of Raja Jai Singh following the defeat of the Saiyid brothers in 1720, may be taken to apply to the empire as a whole after the annexation of Bijapur and Golconda. According to Jagiiwandas, the hasil of the Empire around 1708-9 was a little over 260 m.). From these figures, income from jizyah may be reckoned at about 15 per cent of the total income. However, it may be doubted if the full amount of the jizyah could be realised every year. According to the Nigarnama-i-Munshi, another eighteenth century work, at the outset, jizyah was reckoned at rupees one hundred upon 1,00,000 dams (of the jama') i.e at the flat rate of 4 per cent in the khalisa and jagirmahals, the officials of the khalisa and the jagirholders being left free to realise the amount from the peasants in the manner they considered fit. Exemption from jizyah could be asked for in the case of crop failure, and such exemptions seem to have been made fairly regularly. The towns were apparently assessed separately. It is difficult to form even a rough estimate of the income from them. According to Khafi Khan, Mir Abdul Karim, the amin-i-jizvah, reported in 1092/1681 that he had realised Rs. 26,000----as jizyah from the city of Burhanpur during the previous year, and that in three months he had fixed Rs. 1,08,000/- as the amount payable by half of the wards (pur-jat) of Burhanpur. From a document pertaining to the town and pargana of Badshahpur, we find that out of a total assessment of Rs. 2950/-, the share of the town was Rs 2140-10-0 or roughly 72 Percent. While it is difficult to generalise on the basis of such scanty evidence, it may not be wrong to draw the inference that the income from the town was quite considerable. This may explain why opposition to jizyah manifested itself so often in the towns, and the leading role in it was often played by traders and merchants. An additional duty of 11/2 per cent was levied in lieu of jizyah on all goods imported by the Christian traders, i.e. the English, French, Portuguese and other European Companies trading with India.

Thus, yield from jizyah was not a negligible sum. It should be noted, however, that the proceeds were to be lodged in separate treasury, called the *khazanahi jizyah*, and were earmarked for charitable purposes.

That being so, jizyah can be regarded as a device for relieving the pressure on the general treasury only to the extent that it can be shown that the state found it possible in economise on the amounts being disbursed out of the general treasury for paying the yaumiyadars or cash stipend-holders.

It follows from the above that the purely financial motive can hardly be regarded as a major factor in the reimposition of the jizyah. The measure cannot be understood without taking into account the character, position and role of the large number of stipend-holders who were dependent on the state, and the political and ideological controversies of the period regarding the nature of the state, the position of the Hindus, and the extent to which the 'ulama should determine the basic policies of the State.

The army of stipend-holders, which include

theologians, recluses, widows and orphans, a section of the literati and a large number of nondescript hangers-on, was always a problem for the medieval Sultans. That the state should provide some sustenance for all able bodied Muslims. particularly those who possessed some learning in the Holy Law, was a part of the vague egalitarian and humanitarian legacy of early Islam. As early as the time of Balban, steps had to be taken to curtail the grants and privileges of these sections. But in general the responsibility of providing for this miscellaneous mass-one of the important ways in which the state carried out welfare work was not denied by any ruler. Akbar tried to organise it on a new basis, setting aside villages for grant to the a'immadars. But with the passage of time, the problem again became serious and had to be tackled afresh by Aurangzeb.

The theologians formed a considerable group among the stipend-holders. They had a virtual monopoly of education, and exercised considerable patronage on behalf of the rulers. Their services were utilised by a number of monarchs in administration also. Though their arrogance was distasteful to many rulers, and the venality of many of the gazis brought the 'ulama into disrepute, they could scarcely be ignored by the rulers, since Islam was felt to be the only bond of unity among the diverse groups and sections of the Muslims in India. While the 'ulama were by no means a united body. the rigidity of the shari'a which had been developed in West Asia where conditions were vastly different from those obtaining in medieval India created many political difficulties for the rulers. The extent to which a Sultan in India could rule in accordance with the Shari'a was anxiously debated. Generally speaking, it was agreed that the state in India could not be Islamic in the true sense of the word, and that many un-islamic features, such as the appropriation of the bait-ul-mal by the Sultan for his personal use. the maintenance of great pomp and show by the Sultan, the shedding of Muslim blood, etc. must be tolerated. Nevertheless, the 'ulama expected the Sultans to act as the champions of Islam by suppressing bid'at and the open practice of things forbidden by the shari'a. They also expected them to wage a constant jihad against the Hindus, to degrade and humiliate them, and not permit them to make an open display of idolatrous practices. Most of the theologians considered that the payment of jizyah was necessary and that it was meant to humiliate the Hindus. Some of the 'ulama went to ridiculous lengths in their advocacy of the humiliations that should be heaped upon the Hindus, by the collectors of jizyah. For the theologians the imposition of jizyah was thus a badge of the inferior and dependent status of the Hindus, and a means of asserting the position of the Muslims as the ruling class, and thereby asserting also the superior status of the 'ulama, the upholders of the true faith, in the state.

As political realists, the Sultans and their leading nobles were not prepared to pursue policies which might create unnecessary political difficulties. The divergence between the interests of the 'ulama and the sections exercising political power must be regarded as a characteristic feature of Muslim Society in medieval India. As might be expected, neither the 'ulama nor the political elements formed a united body. The debate between the two trends, the orthodox and the liberal, one of which advocated the policy of treating the Hindus as perpetual enemies, humiliating them and excluding them from all share in political power, and the other, which favoured a policy of leniency to the Hindus once they had submitted, and of trying to win over the Hindu Rajas to a position of active alliance by various concessions, remained a feature of intellectual and political life in the country till the 18th century. The orthodox trend could call to its assistance the powerful forces of dogmatism, taking a rigid stand on the letter of the Law, which took little account of the situation prevailing inside India. The 'liberal' trend appealed to political expediency. Doctrinal differences, such as the controversy between the advocates of Wahadat-al-Wujud and those of Wahadat-al-shahud also divided them.

The break-up of the Delhi Sultanat and the setting up of a number of provincial kingdoms resulted in the establishment of closer relations between the Muslim rulers and the indigenous Hindu 'nobility' in these areas. The settlement of Afghans in large numbers in rural areas had the same effect. The trend towards the associations of Hindus zamindars in the services of the state at various levels was given a powerful fillip by the Lodhi and Sur rulers, and was adopted as a matter of policy by Akbar. These developments implied the virtual breakdown of the theory of the state painfully evolved during the Sultanate period. A further breach was made by

Akbar's decision to abolish the jizyah in 1564.

According to Abu-l-Fazl, the Emperor had to override 'The disapproval of statesmen' and 'much chatter on the part of the ignorant'! The opposition of the 'ulama, 'the stiff-necked ones of the age', seems to have been particularly vehement, but it was of no avail.

The basic arguments advanced by Abu-l-Fazl in justification of the abolition of the jizyah were political and ideological, though the economic aspect was not overlooked. He argued that jizvah was formerly levied on account of 'the opposition of the Hindus and the greed of the rulers'. However, due to 'the abundant goodwill and graciousness of the lord of the age', people of different religions had 'like those of one mind, bound up the waist of devotion and service, and exert themselves for the advancement of the dominion', and for this reason, a distinction had to be made between them and that old section which cherished moral enmity. Moreover, he argues, formerly jizyah was levied because of the neediness of the rulers and their assistants, but thanks to his abundant treasures the Emperor had no need of it at that time. He therefore concluded that while the benefits of jizyah were 'imaginary', its imposition tended to 'promote dissensions among the subjects' and was, therefore, politically harmful.

By arguing that the Hindus were as loyal to the state as the Muslims, Abu-l-Fazlsought to remove the chief prop of the theological argument in favour of jizyah. He also stressed that the levying of jizyah under these conditions was against political expediency and natural justice.

The concept that no distinction could be made between the subjects on the ground of their loyalty, combined with the underlying concept of *sulh-i-kul*, that all the religions were roads to one God, clearly tended to put the state as an institution above any particular religion (though not opposed to religion as such). Thus Akbar's concept of the state was strikingly modern and secularist, and cut at the root of clerical privileges. For this reason, if no other, it was unacceptable to orthodox opinion.

It is not necessary for our purposes to attempt a detailed analysis of the conflict between the forces of orthodoxy and liberalism during the seventeenth century. The orthodox elements found a mentor in Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi, and rallied under the slogan of wahdat-al-shuhud. The exact political and intellectual influence of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi during the seventeenth century must not be overestimated. Nevertheless, there seems little doubt about the existence of a fairly powerful trend of orthodox opinion, both among the nobility and the 'ulama. A group in the nobility resented the breach in their monopoly of power in the state, looking upon the monarchy as a racist and religious institution. They resented the logic of Akbar's policy of bringing in ever wider groups of the indigenous ruling-classes into the nobility in order to strengthen the empire. In the early years of Shah Jahan's reign, the Marathas who held ranks of 5000 and above already out-numbered the Rajputs. As extension of this policy was bound to adversely affect the older group in the nobility. The opposition of the orthodox 'ulama to Akbar's concept of the state was no less unrelenting, as had been already noted. The fundamental political problem before the Mughal emperors was to allay the opposition of the orthodox elements without, however, abandoning Akbar's basic policy of allying with the Rajputs and other elements of the indigenous ruling class. This in turn presupposed a policy of broad religious toleration. Jahangir avoided giving open offence to the orthodox elements, but on the whole effected little change in the situation. Shah Jahan tried to assert the fundamentally Islamic character of the state by formally proclaiming himself a defender of the faith, ordering the destruction of newly erected temples, and putting down heretical practices, such as mixed marriages of Hindus and Muslims in Bhimbar. At the same time, he firmly denied the 'ulama a say in determining policies and extended state patronage and support to all sections of the 'ulama, including the wujudis as well as the shuhudis. Shah Jahan's concept of the state was a retrogression from the concept of Akbar as expounded by Abu-l-Fazl. But taking into account the entrenched power of Muslim orthodoxy, it was perhaps the only compromise possible in seventeenth century India. Like all compromise, it rested on no clear principle save political expediency and was, therefore, unstable. Once the fundamentally Islamic character of the state was granted even in theory, the arguments for basing it on the shari'a became overwhelmingly strong. These ideological arguments were reinforced by the fear of a reversion of a reversion to Akbar's concept

of the state, if Dara succeeded to the throne.

Even though Aurangzeb refrained from raising the slogan of Islam prior to the battle of Samugarh, and entered into a political alliance with the Raiputs notably with Rana Rai Singh of Mewar and, to some extent, with Jai Singh Kachwaha of Amber his accession to the throne raised the expectations of orthodox 'ulama. Aurangzeb revived the earlier order against the building of new temples, put down many innovations, and executed Dara and imprisoned Murad on the ostensible plea of violating the laws of Islam. But it seems that at the outset he was not prepared to go beyond the framework of Shah Jahan's policies. Thus, Aurangzeb refrained from reviving jizyah, though there was little doubt about its obligatory nature according to orthodox opinion. He also firmly maintained the policy of allying with the Rajputs and other elements of the indigenous ruling class, granting to Jai Singh and Jaswant Singh a higher position in imperial affairs and in the imperial hierarchy than had been accorded to any Hindu since the days of Raja Man Singh. The 'ulama were not allowed a share in shaping state policies. However, the influence of the orthodox elements gradually increased, partly through Aurangzeb's policy of using religion to counter the popular revulsion against him for his imprisonment of his father and his treatment of his brothers. Aurangzeb's own orthodox bent of mind, and his banning of many traditional practices and observances on the ground that they were opposed to shar'ia, also gave powerful encouragement to this group.

We are told by one contemporary writer that although the question of the revival of jizvah engaged the Emperor's attention at the commencement of his reign, he 'postponed the matter due to certain political exigencies'. There political exigencies have not been described by the author, but we may assume that the need of maintaining the alliance with the Raiputs was one of them. Aurangzeb may also have hoped to arrive at some accord with the Marathas. These hopes, however, faded particularly after the failure of Bahadur Khan's negotiations with Shivaji in 1676, Shivaji's attempt to carve out a Maratha dominion in the south in alliance with Golconda, and his virtual assumption of the mantle of being the defender of the Decanni states against the Mughals. It was in these circumstances, and in order to cope with the

danger of the imminent dissolution of the Deccani states, that in 1676 Aurangzeb resolved upon a policy of all out expansion of the Mughal empire towards the Deccan. He thus abandoned the policy of limited encroachments which the Mughals had pursued since the days of Akbar, and which had been the policy of Shah Jahan in his settlement of 1636, and Aurangzeb's own policy since his accession.

Thus, politically, by the year 1676 Aurangzeb had reached the parting of the ways with Shah Jahan's policies. A new era of extended warfare and strenuous efforts was opening up. The period from 1676 to 1678 saw vigorous operations in the Deccan. As a minimum objective, the Mughals attempted to establish for themselves a position in Bijapur and Golconda which would enable them to detach these states from their alliance with the Marathas, safeguard against the danger of their passing under Maratha domination, and enable the Mughals to utilise the resources and territories of these countries against the Marathas. However, by 1678 the Mughals had failed to attain even these limited objectives. It appears that in the circumstances, Aurangzeb felt the need to make some striking declaration, which might rouse enthusiasm and rally Muslim opinion behind him. In the past, when faced with of critical situation, rulers had proclaimed a jihad. To the essentially conservative mind of Aurangzeb, it seemed that nothing could be more appropriate than that the new phase in the expansion of the Empire should be marked by the reinstitution of jizyah, signifying the reversion to a more orthodox type of state. The Rajput war, too, should perhaps be seen in the context of this new aggressive mood caused by the deepening political crisis of the empire in the Deccan. Although the reimposition of jizyah coincided with the outbreak of the Rathor War, it did not imply abandoning Akbar's policy of allying with the Raiputs and other elements in the indigenous ruling class. This is apparent from a number of pronouncements by Aurangzeb. Recent research has established that the number of Hindus in the various echelons of the nobility did not decline but actually increased after 1679. Thus, the reimposition of jizyah can hardly be taken to mark the inauguration of a more bitterly anti-Hindu policy, as had sometimes been argued.

We have suggested that the revival of jizyah marked a deepening political crisis, due primarily to the

deterioration of the situation in the Deccan. The Rathor war further accentuated the crisis, but was not its cause. Another factor in the reimposition of jizyah was the growing unemployment among the clerical elements. Even the descendants of Shaikh Mu'inuddin Chishti the patron saint of the Mughals, were living in poverty and want. By earmarking the proceeds of jizvah for distribution in charity among the learnedz, the fagirs, the theologians etc. and further, by providing that the new department of jizyah, with its own treasury and set of amins, should be staffed predominantly from these sections, Aurangzeb offered a huge bribe to the orthodox clerical element. Through clerical influence, Aurangzeb hoped to rally all sections of the Muslims behind him. However, the clerical elements took advantage of the situation for large scale exactions and oppressions, and the amassing of private fortunes. The Imperial news-reporter wrote from Mertha that the gazi there had extorted large sums from the Hindus by way of jizyah. Manucci goes further and asserts that the amins of jizyah kept back half or even three-fourths of the proceeds for themselves. There is some evidence, too, that the gazis sometimes used the realisation of jizyah as an occasion to insult and humiliate those who paid it.

Aurangzeb thus tried to tread his way back to a more orthodox type of state, which had some parallels in the Sultanate period. As Khafi Khan and Ma'amuri state, the true purpose of the measure was 'to distinguish dar-ul-Islam (i.e. land where shari'a ruled) from dar-ul-harb (i.e. land of infidelity'. But Aurangzeb did not bear in mind that India of the seventeenth century was not the same as that of fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The forces of mutual tolerance and integration had grown powerfully during the period and the traditions of Akbar were strongly established. Even Aurangzeb realised that it was not possible to exclude the Hindus from the nobility and thus from wielding political and military power on behalf of the Islamic state.

The revival of jizyah was thus a meaningless gesture. It was opposed by a powerful section of the nobility including, it is said, Jahanara Begum. It is significant that shortly after the dearth of Aurangzeb, the lead in abolishing jizyah was taken by Asad Khan and Zu'lfiqar Khan, two of the premier nobles of Aurangzeb. Evidently, they

represented that section of the ruling class which considered jizyah, politically inexpedient and also found distasteful any growth in clerical influence, or opportunity for clerical interference in political affairs. It was bitterly resented by the Hindu Rajas not in the service of the state. The exact incidence of the jizvah on each section is not easy to compute. A modern estimate is that the city labourer had to pay about one month's wage in the year jizvah. But it is possible that ordinary labourers and people who only earned enough to support themselves and their families were classified as 'indigent', and as such excluded from paying jizyah. Again, while Aurangzeb objected strenuously to exemptions from payment of jizyah, such exemptions seem to have been regularly granted. In 1704, jizyah was remitted in the entire Deccan on accounts of the distress caused by the famine and war.

Politically, the greatest objection to jizyah was that it harassed and alienated some of the most influential sections of the Hindus, namely the urban masses, particularly the rapidly growing class of merchants, shop-keepers, financiers etc, who occupied an increasingly important place in the social and economic life of the country. These people were subjected to great harassment and oppression by the collectors of jizyah, and in retaliation resorted on a number of occasions to hartal and public demonstrations. Finally, jizyah proved a convenient slogan to the political opponents of the Empire for rallying Hindu sentiment against it. Well might Prince Akbar write:

In your Majesty's reign the ministers have no power, the nobles enjoy no trust, the soldiers are wretchedly poor, the writers are without employment, and traders are without means. The peasantry are downtrodden.... On the Hindu tribe (lit. firga or community) two calamities have descended, (first) the exaction of Jizyah in the towns and (second) the oppression of the enemy in the country (i.e. the Marathas). When such sufferings have come down upon the heads of the people from all sides, why should they not fail to pray for or thank their rulers!

The experiment of Aurangzeb with jizyah, if it demonstrated anything, demonstrated the practical impossibility of basing the state in India even formally on the shari'a, and of maintaining a distinction between the Hindu and the Muslim subjects on the basis. Ultimately, neither the broadbased, secularist state of Akbar, nor the narrowbased state of the Sultanate period prevailed. What generally prevailed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries under Muslim rulers was the eclectic compromise of Shah Jahan.

Causes of the Rathor Rebellion of 1679

(Originally published in Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Delhi Session, 1961)

-Mohammad Athar Ali

Aurangzeb's policy towards the Rajputs, especially his handling of the question of succession to the gaddi or Marwar after the death of Jaswant Singh (1678), is considerably clouded by controversy. The discrepancies in chronicles about events of the Rathore Rebellion of 1679 have long been the despair of historians and we find important factual gaps in the account given in the monumental 'History of Aurangzeb' by Sir Jadunath Sarkar. Fortunately, however, we now have the monthly despatches of the official news-writer of Ajmer, covering precisely this period (1678, 1679, 1680). Written with the object of providing accurate information to the Court, for the entire province of Ajmer, which included all the chief Rajput States, it gives us detailed reports of events, negotiations and other transactions taking place at the time. This enables us to have a pretty clear picture of what actually took place during these critical years, the nature of the policy of Aurangzeb, and of the viewpoints of the several sections of the Raiputs. On the



Figure 1: Jaswant Singh of Marwar Following whose death the Rathore Rebellion occurred.

basis of this, we are now enabled to trace in detail, with considerable confidence in for public consumption, but for the knowledge of the Emperor himself, the reliability of our information (for the news-writer was not writing the succession of events) following the death of Jaswant Singh and leading to the rebellion.

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When Jaswant Singh died in December 1678, he left no son. At the time of his death he was also heavily in debt to the imperial treasury. Iftikhar Khan, the governor of Ajmer reported in Ziqad, 1089 A.H. (January, 1679) that the late Raja Jaswant Singh and his forefathers had hoarded a large amount of cash and treasure in the fort of Sawanah. So a search was made for the hidden treasure of the Raja, in order to



Figure 2: Emperor Aurangzeb : Miscellaneous miniature, origin : Delhi, Artist : unknown, ca. 1860 - 1870 (made)

satisfy government claims, but it yielded nothing. Then an order was issued in Zilhij (February, 1679) that the entire property belonging to the Raja should be escheated. Kesri Sing Mutsaddi along with Raghunath Singh and other Rajputs prepared a list of the entire property belonging to the late Raja and presented it before Iftikhar Khan (Ziqada, January, 1679). Pending his decision about the succession, Aurangzeb declared in the same month that the whole of Marwar, including the capital, with the exemption of only two parganas, was to be resumed to the Khalisa, and royal officials were deputed to take over charge. This aroused the indignation of the Rathors, who declared that if Jodhpur, the seat of their clan and the place where the mourning of the dead king was taking place, was taken into the Khalisa, the prestige of the Rathors would be adversely affected. They came to Iftikhar Khan and represented as follows: "During the rule of the Mughal Dynasty, no Bumi or Zamindar has been turned out of his native place (Watan) even on the commission of any specific fault. The Rathors, who have always been loyal and faithful, ask simply that they be not subjected to exile" They were prepared to give over the whole of Marwar, but not the illfortified town of Jodhpur. Iftikhar Khan (February, 1679) suggested to the Rajputs that they should accompany him to the court so that their demands might be fulfilled. The Rajputs, however, refused this offer. Iftikhar Khan defended the imperial resumption of Jodhpur to the Khalisa on the ground that according to the rules, watan could not be conferred upon either a woman or a servant. Aurangzeb in the meanwhile had issued another order designed to placate the deceased Raia's officers. All of them were to be left the pattas or assignments granted to them by Jaswant Singh, these being formally considered their jagirs, so that against these they would receive corresponding mansabs from the imperial court. Jaswant Singh's officers declined this offer possibly (for this is not stated) because they thought it would lead to the permanent disruption of the Marwar Kingdom. When pressed by Iftikhar Khan they declared that though they knew they could not resist the imperial army, they had decided to die rather than to submit.

The situation was further complicated when, to the relief of Jaswant Singh's officers, the news arrived in March or April that the two wives of Jaswant Singh had given birth to two sons. This meant that they had now a candidate, in the person of Ajit Singh, one of the posthumous sons, whom they could present for the Marwar throne.

The Emperor too seems to have accepted the genuineness of the two sons (one of whom died shortly after birth) without question. Thus we read in the report that the fort of Pakhran had been conferred on Rawal Amar Singh, but after the birth of Jaswant Singh's posthumous sons, the Rawal was informed Rabi 1 May, 1679) that the grant was being revoked, as sons had been born to Jaswant Singh, and the Emperor was favourably disposed towards them.

But soon afterwards, Aurangzeb conferred the tika on Indar Singh on the payment of 36 lakhs of Rupees as succession fee. The appointment of Indar Singh as Raja of Jodhpur came as a great surprise to the Rathors, and they opposed Indar Singh with full vigour. Uptill now, Aurangzeb had not taken any decision about the succession to Marwar throne. It is significant that Jaswant Singh's officers could not suggest any name for the incumbent of the gaddi, which meant, as Iftikhar Khan pointed out, they were arguing for the retention of Marwar in the hands of the "Women and servants" of the late Raja,

a position that was hardly acceptable in the circumstances of the time. As for Indar Singh, (grandson of Amar Singh, elder brother of Jaswant Singh) he belonged to a line hostile to Jaswant Singh and his followers, and his attempt to secure succession to the Jodhpur, gaddi was opposed by most of the Rathor leaders.

There was another claimant still in the person of Anup Singh, son of Rao Karan, who had at Rank of 2,500/2000. He offered 45 lakhs of Rupees as succession fee. Anup Singh was a blood relation of Jaswant Singh, but since his relationship to the principal royal line was remote, his claims were not entertained.

When Rani Hadi, the chief queen of Jaswant Singh and other Rajput leaders heard (Jamada 1=June, 1679) that the tika had been conferred on Indar Singh, they sharply protested against it and said it would have been better if the previous order for including Jodhpur into the Khalisa would have been maintained rather than that Jodhpur be handed over to Indar Singh.

Already, in Rabi 1 (April, 1679) before Indar Singh had received the tika, Tahir Khan, Qila'adar of Jodhpur, had suggested to the Rathors that they could please the Emperor by demolishing all the temples within the state and constructing mosques in their place. When the Rajputs heard this, they were very indignant. But them the message was carried to Rani Hadi, Jaswant's chief queen, who was inside the fort as the titular leader of the Rathors, she declared that the (Tahir Khan) could do as he pleased for the good of the Rathors. If Jodhpur was conferred on the sons of the late Raja, the Rajputs undertook to demolish all the temples in the state of Marwar.

That the Rathors reaction to Aurangzeb's decision stemmed solely from a sense of indignation at the appointment of Indar Singh and not from the way the Rathors pressed the case for Ajit. We have just seen that they declared that they preferred the Khalisa or imperial Administration to Indar Sigh. They now proclaimed that if only the tika was given to Ajit Singh, they would be more loyal than the king in carrying out Aurangzeb's pet projects, the collection of the Jiziya and the destruction of temples within Marwar. It may be noted that there is no suggestion anywhere that Indar Singh had given such a pledge to secure the tika.

Two months later (Jamada 1=June, 1679), when Indar Singh had been appointed Raja, two of the spokesmen of the Rathors, Ram Bhati and Sonak Rathor went to Qazi Hamid of Jodhpur and represented as follows:

The Zamindari of the country of Marwar was the property of Raja Jaswant Singh and after his death by the law of inheritance the Zamindari of the country devolves on his sons. In the presence of the sons of the late Jaswant Singh, Indar Singh had no right to succeed. If the Watan and the Zamindari was conferred on the sons of the deceased Raja, the Rajputs undertook to demolish all the temples of Jodhpur and construct mosques instead. The Rajputs were also prepared to promulgate the law of the Shariat and to carry out the orders of the Emperor to whatever effect. We want to know the law of the Shariat in this case. The Qazi gave them no answer and forwarded the case to Qazi Shaikhul-Islam.

Tahir Khan also reported in the same month to the Emperor that the Rajputs were prepared to demolish all the temples within the Jodhpur State, to promulgate Islam and to offer a bigger Peshkash than that offered by Indar Singh, if the latter's appointment as the Raja of Jodhpur was cancelled. The imperial Waqai Navis in Jamada 1, (June, 1679) reported that "the root cause of the Rajput rebellion is Indar Singh because he is intensely unpopular in Marwar and no one likes him. The Rajputs would be agreeable and pleased if Jodhpur is included in the Khalisa permanently". The next month Ram Bhati and Sonak Rathor entered an exactly similar plea with Tahir Khan.

When the Rajputs failed in their attempt to get the appointment of Indar Singh cancelled, they asked Tahir Khan in Jamada 11 (July, 1679) to leave Jodhpur because they had decided to oppose Indar Singh and offer him battle. Chauhar Mal, the Mutasaddi of Indar Singh, could not enter Jodhpur owing to the opposition of the Rajputs.

This was a prelude to the Rebellion. The flight of Ajit from the court arranged by Durga Das, followed. Aurangzeb's acceptance of a false Ajit as the true one, and his first refusal to recognize the genuineness of the real Ajit barred the way to any compromise. The news-reporter of Ajmer reported a conversation between Sujan Singh Rathor and Papdshah Quli Khan, in which the former, protesting his loyalty to the Emperor asserted the genuineness of the real Ajit and said that Durga Das, Sonak and other Rathors were fighting only for the sake of Ajit and they would not otherwise have been able to resist Raja Indar Singh. When this report was presented to Aurangzeb, he gravely censured the news-reporter for giving credence to such statements.

The Waqai Ajmer thus presents us with a mass of new information which enables us to re-interpret the events leading to the Rajput War. It seems to me that the basic assumptions postulated by Sir Jadunath Sarkar to explain the causes of the war cannot be easily accepted in the light of this information. Sarkar assumes, in the first place, that through Jaswant Singh had no son, Aurangzeb could have immediately appointed Indar Singh "a loyal grandee", and his failure to do so suggests that he wanted to destroy the Marwar Kingdom. But we have seen, that if Indar Singh was not appointed for five months, it was solely because he was not acceptable to the Rathors, who throughout expressed their hostility to him in no uncertain terms.

The second assumption put forward by Sarkar is that Aurangzeb wanted to make Jaswant's state "a quiescent dependency" or "a regular province of the Empire, for Hindu resistance to the policy of religious persecution must be deprived of a possible efficient head". But again, we see that if this was Aurangzeb's real objective, this could have been secured best by accepting Ajit. His partisans were ready to destroy temples and enforce the Shariat—things for which Indar Singh never gave his consent. Moreover, Ajit was a baby at the time, and even if Aurangzeb had seen (mistakenly) the marks of future greatness in this baby, it was obvious that simply because of his age, Ajit could not at least for a decade and half have become the "efficient head" of any Hindu resistance.

The only plausible support for Sarkar's argument lies in the delay of five months which Aurangzeb allowed before appointing Indar Singh. There is, however, a possible explanation which arises from the Waqai Ajmer. The Rathors were opposed to Indar Singh, and their opposition was fortified by the news that two queens of Jaswant were pregnant and might well bear sons. But how could it be known for certain that they could be sons? Aurangzeb might have thought that in case the children turned out to be daughters—for which there was, after all, every chance—the whole issue would be simplified, since the Rathors would no longer have any candidate to pit against Indar Singh. In case they turned out to be boys, Aurangzeb's task would be no less difficult whether he appointed Indar Singh before or after their birth.

It has also not been appreciated that Aurangzeb might have preferred Indar Singh to Ajit for quite the opposite reason than what Sarkar has suggested. There is no reason to believe that Indar Singh was incompetent. In 1678 he was already holding the rank of 1,000/(700x2-32h) and had served with some distinction in the Deccan. It could be urged that Aurangzeb wanted an able officer, not an incompetent head to the Marwar state so that peace and order might be maintained in that strategic state (it lay astride and main Agra-Ahmadabad route) and it might continue to supply military contingents to the Mughal armies. It is also to be remembered that Aurangzeb was not stepping beyond custom and precedent in overlooking Ajit's claim and selecting Indar Singh. Jahangir asserted this imperial prerogative in no uncertain terms sixty-five years earlier in the case of Bikaner. Similarly, he had rejected the claims of Man Singh's grandson, Maha Singh, to the Amber throne, despite the fact that Raiput custom had prescribed his succession.

In appraising Aurangzeb's policy towards Marwar, we should perhaps guard against the assumption made without much historical basis, that it was a part of his alleged anti-Rajput policy. Aurangzeb's first twenty years showed no signs of any hostility towards the Raiputs. On the contrary, they seem to have been the objects of particular imperial attention. In the first two years of Aurangzeb's reign, zat rank amounting to 14,100, making up 19 percent of the total additions, were bestowed upon Rajput officers. This should be considered in the light of the fact that in Shahjahan's entire reign, Rajputs comprised only 16 percent of mansabdars holding the ranks of 1,000 and above. Even this does not show the true extent of royal favours bestowed upon Rajputs. There was no Rajput officer throughout the

reign of Shahjahan holding the rank of 7,000. Now Jai Singh and Jaswant Singh—latter, depite his role at the battle of Dharmat and Khawjwah—were promoted to 7,000/7,000 each. The representation of the Rajput mansabdars holding the rank of 1,000 and above during the first twenty years of Aurangzeb's reign (1658-78) was 14%. This is nearly at par with the proportion of 16% mansabdars of the rank of 1,000 and above during Shahjahan's reign.

The rebellion of the Rathors and Sisodias was not really a 'Rajput rebellion' if by that is meant that the majority of the Rajputs were involved in it. The Kachwahas, the Hadas, the Bhatis, the Rathors of Bikaner, all remained loyal to the Mughals.

Yet while most of the Rajputs had not so far been alienated by Aurangzeb's policy as to rebel against him. The Rajput rebels too were not completely friendless within the rest of the Mughal nobility. The very fact that Prince Akbar should have staked his fortune and placed himself at the head of the rebels shows that he expected some support from within

the nobility. Tahawaur Khan, his main supporter, enjoyed no mean status. In actual fact Bahadur Khan Kokaltash, the leading noble of Aurangzeb at the time, was said to have advised Aurangzeb that he should recognize Ajit Singh.

On the whole, though one must not be dogmatic, it seems that the cause of the Rebellion of 1679 lay in the clan rivalries and disputes among the Rajputs themselves. As long as the imperial power was strong they overruled the claims of one clan or party against another without danger of rebellion. Jahangir had done it in the case of the Kachwahas without provoking any armed opposition. Under Aurangzeb, however, such an assertion of imperial authority was not quietly accepted, perhaps because the Rathors felt that they could defy imperial government with some chance of survival, if not success. For such an attitude on their part, Aurangzeb's involvement in the north-west, and in the Deccan, and the series of internal rebellions starting with the Jats were responsible of 1679-80.

Revisiting Aurangzeb and his Attitude towards Non-Muslims

(Originally published in The Frontline)

-Prof. Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi

Was Aurangzeb a bigot, a religious fanatic who tried to propagate Islam and suppress Hinduism and other religions, or was he using religion for his politics, is a question which has been raised a number of times, from Colonial historians like Joseph Davey Cunningham to Sir Jadunath Sarkar and from S R Sharma to M Athar Ali. A more modern historian whose work in this regard became quite popular is Audrey Truschke.

Recently the debate has been tried to be taken to another level by the utterances of Shri Aditya Nath and other such luminaries of the BJP. He along with many amongst the Hindutva forces try to show Aurangzeb as a devil incarnate.

A holistic reading of the primary sources does not

totally absolve Aurangzeb of this charge. A more calibrated research however shows that Aurangzeb though not a bigot, used religion to further his political ends. If on the one hand he issued a letter (nishān) to the Maharana of Mewar, Rana Raj Singh, promising to follow the same policy as that of Akbar, on coming to the throne he had to take steps which were just the opposite. He took up the throne after a bitter and bloody contest and for the first ten years he had to contend with a jailed father who was a constant threat to his position.

The War of Succession was not fought either on communal considerations or on the basis of the ideological clash between the tolerant policies of Dara Shukoh and the so called anti-Hindu policy of Aurangzeb.



Figure 1: Aurangzeb: The Life and Legacy of India's Most Controversial King, Audrey Truschke, Stanford University Press, 152 pp.

Aurangzeb never made a claim that he was going to defend Islam and at no stage he felt that Islam was being threatened either by Shahjahan or by Dara Shukoh. So just after the accession, we find that there was no discrimination either against the Hindus or against the Rajputs.

Soon on getting the throne Aurangzeb appointed Raja Raghunath Singh, a Khatri, as the diwan of the Empire. And one will recall that after the death of Raja Todarmal, no non-Muslim had been appointed as the diwan of the Empire.

And after the re-call of Man Singh in 1606 by Jahangir, no non-Muslim had been appointed as the subahdar of any important province of the Empire either during the reign of Jahangir or during the reign of Shahjahan. Now Aurangzeb appointed two non-Muslims: Maharaja Jaswant Singh and Mirza Raja Jai Singh.

Jaswant Singh was appointed subahdar of Gujarat in spite of his opposition to Aurangzeb at the Battle of Dharmat and his treachery to Aurangzeb at the Battle of Khajua. Gujarat was the nerve centre of the Mughal economy.

Mirza Raja Jai Singh was appointed as the viceroy of the Deccan – the office to which only princes of Royal blood were entrusted. So if the term 'discrimination' is so indispensable to be used, it was used in favour of the Rajputs and not against them during the early years of Aurangzeb's reign.

Thus Rajputs like Mirza Raja Jai Singh and Raja Jaswant Singh along with a host of others were elevated to the highest rank of 8000, which only a few could ever enjoy. And as noted, Rajputs were also appointed to the most important and prestigious provinces like Gujarat, Bengal and Bihar and a Hindu was appointed as the Diwan of the Empire.

Under Aurangzeb the Marathas were recruited on a large scale. The Deccani Afghans also joined at a large scale. These new entrants in the Mughal aristocracy were recruited obviously at the cost of the Turanis and the Rajputs. Thus both these groups resented the inclusion of Marathas and the Afghans as they considered the Mughal Empire as their reserve. Now there was competition which they faced in their turf.

The tremendous increase in the numerical strength of the Marathas and the Afghans led to an increase in

the strength of the Mughal bureaucracy under Aurangzeb. Under him, as the empirical works of Professor M Athar Ali conclusively demonstrate, there were around 31% non-Muslims, while under Akbar there were only 22%!

But at the same time, the inclusion of the Marathas in the second half of Aurangzeb's reign must not be considered that he was following a secular policy or a more tolerant policy than that of Akbar: It was an administrative necessity which was needed to annex and consolidate the Deccan. The primary factor governing the policy of a Mughal emperor was his political necessity.

We should also remember and highlight that Aurangzebis the same king who gave more grants to Hindu temples than any other emperor before him. In fact the Vrindavan temples are an example of the grants which he gave for their upkeep. And let us also not forget what a Rajput ruler's agent wrote in his news report (Waqai Ajmer): Aurangzeb summarily refused the offer of Rani Hadi, the widow of Raja Jaswant Singh Rathore, to break all temples if her political claims were accepted.

To prove that he deserved the throne more than his father he initiated a policy of conquest. Unfortunately most of these military expeditions failed: Mir Jumla died fighting in Assam; Shaista Khan was attacked in his bed chamber in the Deccan by Shivaji; Mirza Raja Jai Singh succeeded in the treaty of Purandhara in 1665 but the fruits of the treaty were taken away when Shivaji fled from Agra.

And when the military expeditions failed, a chain reaction set in. Jat rebellion of 1669; the Satnami uprising of 1672; the Yusufzai revolt in 1667 and the Afridi revolt in 1674. In the meantime, Shivaji crowned himself as the king in 1675. So on the political front, to say the least, Aurangzeb was not a success.

He was convinced that the position of the institution of the monarchy had been compromised by his actions. Strength had to be provided from some other quarter when there was a failure on the political front. So just to compensate for the weakening, and just to provide against his political failure, Aurangzeb emphasized the Shariat law.

Aurangzeb started using religion to further his political interests and nullify his failures.

The same year that Shivaji crowned himself as the ruler in the Deccan, a problem arose in the Kashmir and Punjab region.

Guru Tegh Bahadur encouraged the people against Aurangzeb as he was totally opposed to the attempt which was being made by certain officials of Aurangzeb in Kashmir: forcing non-Muslims to accept Islam. Guru Tegh Bahadur acted against those who were involved in these forcible acts and came out openly in rebellion against Aurangzeb. In retaliation, Guru Tegh Bahadur was arrested and ultimately executed in 1675.

According to J D Cunningham, in order to understand the political motive behind the event, one needs to first take into account the historical framework under which Tegh Bahadur was appointed a Sikh guru. Earlier bypassed by his father, Guru Hargobind, Tegh Bahadur was appointed head of the Sikh community after the death of seven-year-old Guru Har Krishan.

During the period of Guru Har Krishan, his older brother, Ram Rai, who wanted the guruhood for himself and thus, plotted incessantly against him, lobbying with a few prominent Sikh leaders and trying to convince the Peasant community that he was, in fact, the rightful spiritual descant of Guru Nanak's creed. When he died, Guru Har Krishan left an impression that Guru Tegh Bahadur was the next guru.

Immediately taking charge of the situation, Guru Tegh Bahadur set out to form new political alliances and to increase his revenue base so that he could compete with the contesting claims to the guruhood. According to Cunningham, the guru and his disciples "subsisted by plunder between the wastes of Hansi and Sutlej rendering them unpopular with the peasantry". He also "leagued with a Muslim zealot, Adam Hafiz, and levied contributions upon rich Hindus and Muslims".

The historian further noted that the guru gave asylum to fugitives. Another complaint against him that reached the ear of the emperor was made by Ram Rai. Like Guru Har Krishan before him, Guru Tegh Bahadur was accused of being a "pretender to power".

The execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur without doubt had religious overtones to the extent that the guru was against the policy of forcible conversion.

We know that the institution of the monarchy had been weakened by the way Aurangzeb ascended the throne. A new prestige had to be added to the institution of the monarchy if the same process was to be avoided: and that is why Aurangzeb made a deliberate attempt to attach religious sanctity to the institution of the monarchy. That is why Aurangzeb chose to be known as Alamgir and zindapir. He made a determined and deliberate attempt to prove his vigour and to emerge as a vigorous king by sanctioning military expeditions. He failed as natural geographical barriers had been reached during the reign of Shahjahan. And when he failed on the political front and a chain reaction started, he tried to conceal his failures behind the shield of emphasising on Shariat. Ultimately, the die was cast and the day of all precautionary measures dawned when in 1679, his youngest son Prince Akbar revolted and wrote a very nasty letter to his father in which he pointed out that 'you are responsible for the death of Shah Shuja, Dara and so forth, and now it is you who are teaching morality...'. But the fiasco, with which the rebellion of Akbar ended with his flight to Persia, is the conclusive evidence that Aurangzeb had succeeded in binding the Muslim aristocracy behind the Mughal throne by emphasising the Shariat laws. It was in the same year that Jizya was imposed. Why did Aurangzeb not impose the jizya from 1658 to 1679? What was the sudden need now?

Jizya was a discriminatory tax, alright. And of course it was humiliating, but then the Rajputs were exempted, the Brahmins were exempted and all those who were in the Mughal service were exempted! In terms of collection, the jizya was graded: the richest man was to pay Rs.12/= per annum, while the less prosperous was supposed to pay Rs.8/= per annum. According to Jadunath Sarkar, it was `3 ¼, 6 2/3 and 3 1/3 per annum for the three classes.

The most pinching aspect of the Jizya was that it was a tax on the poor, who had to pay an average of one month's salary as tax.

It was, again in 1679, that the orders for the destruction of temples were given. Probably these orders were partly in retaliation of the Rathore rebellion, for a number of temples were demolished in Jodhpur. Some of the most famous shrines demolished were the Somnath (Gujarat), the

Vashvanath (Varanasi) and the Keshava Rai (Mathura). In January 1680 Aurangzeb ordered the demolition of three temples standing on the edge of Udai Sagar. If we believe S R Sharma, at Udaipur 172 temples were broken. In Chitor the number stood at 63.

Jizya and temple destruction were both discriminatory policies. But then we have evidence of grants to the temples as well. A number of documents survive which mention a large number of maintenance grants to hindu temples and their priests which had been given by Akbar, Jahangir and Shahjahan which were now confirmed by Aurangzeb. These documents testify to a number of villages being sanctioned for the upkeep of the temples. A case in point could be the extensive grants confirmed by Aurangzeb to the Vrindavan temples and it's priests still preserved with the mahants of the Vrindavan temples of the Chaitanya sect. They were brought to light decades ago by Tarapad Mukherjee and Irfan Habib. Similar are grants which were given or confirmed by him to the Nonidhara Temple at Bahraich.

What was the ultimate result of all this? Did the relations between the Rajputs who were Hindus sour? Contrarily we find the Rajputs understood that what was happening was political. Thus the Rajputs continued to serve Aurangzeb till the last days of the empire. Interestingly in the last 10 years [1698 – 1707], when Aurangzeb died, there were only 3 generals conducting military operations with their full contingents, against the Marathas: Ram Singh Hada, Dalpat Bundela and Jai Singh Sawai. These three nobles were the only persons who were serving the emperor with their full contingents, as they had a separate income from their watan jagirs.

When the doli of Princess Nadira Begum, the wife of Prince Azam, was surrounded by the Marathas while going from Islampuri (where Aurangzeb was at that time situated) to Gilgit, and no reinforcements could reach to rescue her, Ram Singh Hada was with the princess with 750 of his soldiers. The surrounding Marathas were around 10,000 in

number and wanted to kidnap the princes to dictate terms to Aurangzeb. Since the princess was travelling on a doli, the Hada contingent had to follow on foot.

When the Marathas surrounded the doli. The contingent of the Hadas was at a distance as the princess observed purdah.

Nadira Begum sent word to Ram Singh, summoned him and told him that: "asmat-i Rajputiya wa Chaghtaiya yak ast", i.e., 'the honor of the Chaghtais is identical with that of the Rajputs.' "agar īn roz asmat-i Chaghtai raft, ba māra be asmat-i Rajputiya raft!" Ram Singh could understand Persian but could not speak it. So in a broken Persian he replied, 'the malichhas (the unclean, i.e., the Marathas) will not be permitted even to look at the dola and there is no question of their even coming near it!'

Throughout the 17th Century such stiff resistance was never given to the Marathas as was offered by Ram Singh and his Hada contingents in spite of the heavy odds. Ram Singh Hada ultimately succeeded; around 300 Rajputs and 3-4 sons of Ram Singh Hada lost their lives and true to his words, the malichhas were not even permitted to have a look at the dola of Nadira Begum. This was the confidence between the Rajputs and the Mughals: a Mughal princess at a critical hour could appeal to a Rajput as to a Mughal!

This took place in 1699. So it would be incorrect to say that Aurangzeb lost the Rajputs because of the Rathore rebellion or due to his policies.

Apart from the matrimonial alliances and sentimental attachments, the natural interest between the Mughals and Rajputs was also identical. So long as the Mughals expanded or continued to expand, the Rajput states flourished and remainedprosperous. When the Mughal Empire declined, as it did in the 18th Century, the grand houses of Rajputana were plundered by the Marathas. So practically throughout the 16th, 17th and 18th Centuries the Mughals and the Rajputs

An Interview with Audrey Truschke



Question: There are certain terms that evade definitions and are used freely in non-academic pursuits, one such word is Culture, since your first book was on Mughal Cultural Traditions, I would like to know how would you define Culture?

Answer: That's a very pertinent question for me right now, I was brought to India, on this trip by the Seagull Foundation for Arts and they're asking me to speak about Culture. When, I talk of Culture in the book, *Culture of Encounters*, I used Culture in its basics, in the sense of how people live, in particular the Elite Culture or the upper sections of the Mughal Court. In India, scholars like Romila Thapar have pleaded to understand Culture in a broader sense, something that everybody had, that's not something I can squire in my work because most of it is Elite culture, but I am happy that my third project on Sanskrit will bring in a diverse array of Sanskrit authors, so it is not Subaltern history, but we have Jains and Brahmans in the fold.

Question: Again in connection with you work, a question arises weather there was a single Mughal Culture or multiple cultures which grew into one single culture?

Answer: I take the position by my book, that Syncretic Culture started from that point, but seeing it that way prevents us from understanding how that Syncretic culture evolved, the book, a part of it is that process. In the book I see only Literary

Cultures, so I talk of Sanskrit and Persian Literary Cultures, that's an easier thing to demarcate, we can look at the language of the text, with Hindus and Muslims we can see what's Hindu and what's not but that's not the case with text, its either Sanskrit or Persian, but there's some kind of 'Cultural exchange' definitely.

And the question of homogeneous identities of Hindu, Muslim are quite modern.

that's right, 'Hindu' was not used by Hindus in self-reference by Hindus and in Persian texts Hindu meant the other or anyone from India and not the religious sense in which we perceive the term now.

Question: Then do we need a new terminology to talk about the varied information that we get from different cultures of the Indo-Islamic Rule?

Answer: Yes, we do need a new terminology, I used it in the first book but not in the second. If you're writing a popular book it makes no sense to throw scholarly words at the people. That did happen to me when I wrote the second work, there's a need to strip away the specialised terminology, like the term: Islamic theology, because if one does use such terms it may appear that Islam is about the Islamic theology and you reinforce that idea. I do find a need for new terminology but I have not yet quite figured it out.

Question: Coming to your second book, a question that can be asked is why Aurangzeb, why not someone else who's been misrepresented, like Babur because the entire Hindutva narrative goes around the 'sons of Babur'.

Answer: There are many reasons for that, the personal political scholarly pursuits and also because I am thinking of him for the past 10 years since my graduate, research and early career days, I was interested by the politicisation of Aurangzeb and when everyone goes maligning Aurangzeb and there's public interest generated there's a need to bring attention to the historical reality, I do realize

that he is the most misunderstood, major Mughal emperor and need immediate scholarly attention at the moment.

Question: In many *Shahjahani* sources, that is to say prior to Aurangzeb's accession, Aurangzeb has been called *namazi* and a Prince of believers, how do we look at these earlier narratives of him being a religious person.

Answer: First of all, we see Shahjahan didn't much like Aurangzeb when we go back to Shahjahani sources, also, there's some truth in such a narrative, Aurangzeb does come out with the notions of Islamic piety, example banning alcoholism, many Mughal princes died due to its consumption, I sort of don't have a historical explanation of why certain people are more religious than others but in the book, I want to see as to what Aurangzeb's piety actually meant and it is definitely not 20th century wahabi styled interpretation of Islam, it had sufi aspects, it had talismanic aspects and that's more important to bring out. The second more important question is, how is this Islam related to politics in context of Aurangzeb, the conventional argument is that his religious disposition prompted him to do certain things politically, I go with the opposite, I argue that the things that he was forced to do as a political leader arguably made him more religious in his later years, certainly when power and religion conflicted, he chose Power.

Question: Some final questions, how do we not turn into apologists, when dealing with topics this politically and emotionally charged, as the modern day Hindu and Muslim identities can not be denied. So how do we not let our biases rub on to our work, and stay objective?

Answer: I think we have to recognise that no historian is objective, we all write with certain prejudices and ideas, we're in 2018 and I am not immune to what's going on in the world and in India.

But we should strive for objectivity, which is a valuable idea, we must try to recognize our prejudices and try to hold them back, it's wrong to think that someone can succeed in being fully objective, I have had an internal process in recognizing the biases that I may have, but the kind of work I do one can't really escape from being perceived as an apologist, in my treatment of Aurangzeb but I keep repeating, I am not trying to justify him, I don't like Aurangzeb, I don't dislike Aurangzeb. So one thing I offer is to give people an alternative vocabulary from 'justifying' him, we're trying to explain him. So it is an alternative way of thinking about India's past which is not unfamiliar to historians but shockingly unfamiliar to everyone else!

Question: What should we expect of your upcoming book since the questions you're dealing with in it seem very similar to your first one.

Answer: I think it is really different, in *Culture of* Encounters I was dealing with Sanskrit as patronized by the Mughals, in the third book I am dealing with Sanskrit Historical sources on Indo-Islamic rule, so in a way it is temporarily broader, I am starting in the late 12thCentury with the Ghurid incursions and I am going upto 18th Century where Mughal power is cracking, exclusively with Sanskrit sources. I will bring in Persian sources in comparison. We have a body of traditional Sanskrit texts which were not written for the Indo - Muslim rulers or about Indo - Muslim rule or under their patronisation so the deriving research question for this book is what did India's learned elite think about Muslim led incursions and Muslim led rule, today there's no doubt among Historians that the coming of Islam to South Asia constituted the single biggest shift of Cultural- religious and political shift of the millennium. So the question is, what did the Indian elite who lived through it think of it.

Audrey Truschke visits AMU

As the audience hall on the ground floor of the Arts Faculty of Aligarh Muslim University started to fill with people, mostly students, early on the 13th of August 2018, it wasn't a surprise for the organizers. Audrey Truschke was to speak on Aurangzeb, the most controversial if not misunderstood figure of Indian History. The day was cloudy and the woman who had led the country by storm by merely an academic exercise was about to arrive at Aligarh. The safety of the four walls of the audience hall seemed shaky since everyone present was aware that this purely academic endeavour is a threat to many. An academic gathering of a similar nature had been cancelled in Hyderabad a few days before this lecture because of pressure from right wing groups who saw this woman, talking truth to power, as a threat to their idea of India. An interesting question

that can be asked here is why have academicians, with their well worded often confusing arguments and thick fat books, come to the forefront of a political turmoil? The answer to this question is both sad and disturbing; the freedom of doing scientific factual research in any field has become a difficult task and this has specially been the case with history, which has been burdened with the responsibility to provide people with identities. And more often than not the popular understanding of history has read many modern identities into the past which has created much trouble. The first lecture of Dr. Truschke raised many concerns and the most important was that of the need of the academics to bring their arguments to the general masses, to not let that space be monopolized by the perpetuators of ill-informed and distorted histories



Figure 1: Dr. Truschke delivering her talk

The kind of popularity and trolling faced by Dr. Truschke who teaches South Asian History at Rutgers University, New Jersey, USA is not common to academicians. She shot to fame when her book, Aurangzeb: The Man and the Myth (2017) rocketed Mughal History into a whole new sphere of popular discourse on the past. History met popular masses in its essence through this work of Truschke. But before becoming the most hated historian of Indian past, due to her arguments on Aurangzeb, she had already written an academically acclaimed book on the culture at the Mughal court, **Culture of Encounters: Sanskrit at the Mughal** Court (2016), This work was hugely appreciated among the academic circles. It was however her latter work that holds much more meaning in the light of recent shift of narratives towards communal interpretation of history. Dr. Truschke in her latter book attempted at' freeing the Mughal sovereign of the undue dehumanization and condemnation' he earned by the communal and partisan interpretations of History often misused by

politicians to polarise people on religious grounds.

Her visit to the Centre of Advanced Study, Department of History, AMU seemed like a step in the direction of popularizing the scientific research on Aurangzeb as the department boasts of its associations with the stalwarts in history like Satish Chandra, M Athar Ali and Jadunath Sarkar, who have extensively worked on Aurangzeb and comprehended newer aspects of his history and reign. The two day engagement of the CAS Department of history with Dr. Truschke was an academic exercise marked by certain agreements and disagreements between the Aligarh School of historians and the visitor on various aspects of History and History writing. However, the hosts and the guest both agreed upon the importance of the task of safe guarding the discipline of history against a partisan over view of it. Importance of attempts at popularising themes of History fora larger audience was asserted.

The first talk held on the 13th of August, 2018was

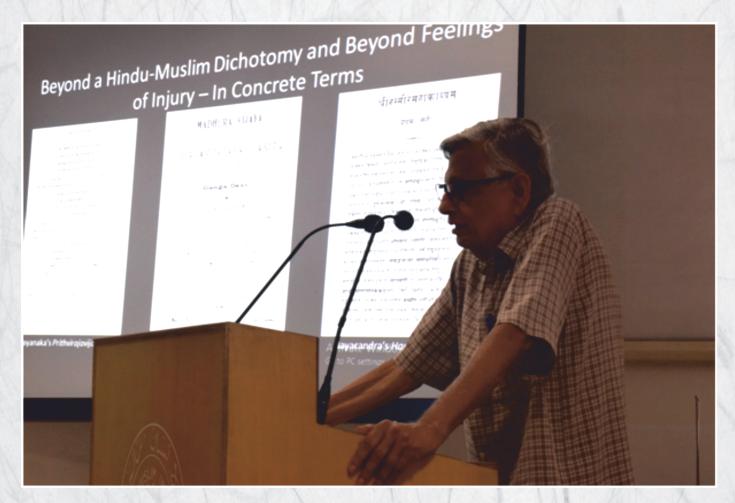


Figure 2: Prof. Irfan Habib giving his Presidential Remarks

themed 'Aurangzeb Alamgir: Justice, Power and Hate in the Interpretation of Mughal'. The session was introduced by Professor Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi (Chairperson Department of History, AMU) who congratulated Dr. Truschke on her momentous work and the remarkable courage she displayed despite adverse responses on her work. The talk was chaired by Professor Shireen Moosvi. Noted historian, Iqtidar Alam Khan was also among the attendees.

Dr. Truschke began this lecture with the politics behind the changing of the name of Aurangzeb road to APJ Abul Kalam road. She situated this event in context of the developing narrative which pitches a good Muslim against a bad Muslim. The epitome of a bad Muslim in this narrative is Aurangzeb and he has in present times become the focal point of the justification of the present vilification of the Muslim community at large. This, the speaker suggested was a result of colonial nature of knowledge being passed down to us. She reflected how colonial writers like Elliot and Dowson (*The History of India, as told by its Own Historians*) were on a mission to defend Colonial rule and to achieve

which they tried to make themselves look righteous as compared to the 'debauched – Muhammaden Kings' a narrative later fuelled the Hindutva patriotization of locating India as essentially Hindu.

Coming to Aurangzeb's reign she said that her work was based on extensive research of Primary documents which hints that Muslim sovereigns and especially Aurangzeb were largely obsessed with the idea of 'Justice' which is narrated in Ishavaradasa's Sanskrit work of his period. She mentioned how in Aurangzeb's imagination the idea of being a great king was not to expand his domains but to govern his subjects with equity. The problem she admitted, is judging the past by the present, Aurangzeb's Idea of Justice was different from ours' in the 21st century. Addressing the issue of temple desecration, she referred to a Farman from Benaras in which Aurangzeb comes out essentially as a protector of temples, thoughthe portraiture which has gained popularity is where he is largely seen as a temple destructor. She argued that the motivations were mostly political and when Religion and Power clashed, Aurangzeb always chose Power.



Figure 3: Dr. Truschke signing the copies of her book for the students

Remarking at the censorship of History she faced while on this project, she said 'when you hate History, you reach out to control it'. She also mentioned how she had to leave out certain sections on Shivaji out of the Indian edition of her book because they might have hurt the sentiments of certain sections. Despite these measures taken to keep the text as less controversial as possible, Dr. Truschke has been a victim of online trolling and hate mails since her book came out because it rebuts the condemnation of a 'Muslim' sovereign. The hatred towards her has many undertones, some of the messages were atrociously dangerous including rape and murder threats, others were of anti-semetic nature despite her not being a Jew, some others delegitimized her scholarship on the basis of her non-Indian origin. The severity of these threats and the psychology and mechanism behind them were also discussed in the session. The talk was followed by a question and answer session.

Professor Moosvi concluded the session by giving her presidential remarks where she argued that despite being colonial writers the translations of Elliot and Dowson hardly has any mistake, the colonial bias then might be understood in the choice of the Persian sources they decided to translate. She added that the temple desecrations that Aurangzeb was accused of were actually hardly executed thus, there's a need to critically examine the sources which we base our narratives on. She also advised scholars to guard against 'apologetic defence' of the ruler, since that is not the job of the historian. She argued that the grants to temples were given in his reign but none were directly given by him, she further added that many officers at the lower level were responsible for the sustenance and upkeep of temples during the reign of Aurangzeb, this Prof. Moosvi argued reflects the true social fabric of India at the ground level, Indian masses have always been tolerant.

The second lecture by Dr. Truschke was themed 'Becoming Indian Kings: Sanskrit Literary Histories of Indo-Islamic Rule'. The talk was introduced by Professor Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi who said the importance of parallel source material as opposed to merely Persian sources was impending in developing narratives of medieval Indian past afresh. The session was chaired by Professor Emeritus Irfan Habib.



Figure 4: Dr. Truschke visiting Musa Dakri Museum at AMU

Dr. Truschke introduced the talk to be an overview of her current project which analyses Sanskrit texts in order to expand the scope of understanding the so called Muslim incursions in India. This brings forth the representation and depiction of the Turkish invaders in the indigenous sources which were written in Sanskrit and belonged to the Hindu. Buddhist and Jain traditions. These sources argued Dr. Tuschke were largely left neglected in the process of history writing. She asserted that this neglect was an extension of the idea perpetuated by the Orientalists which suggested that Indian Histories were a-historic and insignificant. She suggested the 'kavya' genre of Sanskrit literature to be a substantial source for understanding indigenous response to the dynamism of 12th century.

In the next portion of the lecture she discussed the three sources, on which her project was based namely,

I) Jayanaka's Prithvirajavijaya (1191) in which the different terminologies of references to Ghurids can be found, she

- demarcated how 'cow-killer' was used in terms of cultural differences and not in the binary of Hindu Muslim identity. She further analysed the terminologies used by Sanskrit sources to refer to the Turks.
- ii) Gangadevi's Madhuravijaya (1380) and her depiction of Ghurid Sultans as brave warriors like the Kshatriyas, and how the new comers were somehow 'accepted' into the indigenous realm despite the differences.
- which calls Muslim warriors as Kshatriyas on account of their bravery, honor and self initiated death which have been traits of the Kshatriyas.

Moving on, Dr. Truschke established the dangers of placing these histories as narratives of violence and bloodshed instead of focusing on cross-cultural interactions which are also embedded in these texts. She said that these primary sources could be utilised



Figure 5: Prof. Shireen Moosvi delivering her Presidential Address

for promoting non-Sectarian histories and can help in looking at the past as transcending the dichotomy of Hindus or Muslims. She opined that the case study of these sources attempted to locate alliances in the past beyond religious identities and provide fresh perspectives to look at the past.

The lecture was followed by a question and answer session, where the discussion shifted to an important issue of the interaction of the Persian and Sanskrit sources for the same period of history.

Professor Irfan Habib in his closing comments gave a critical assessment of the sources discussed and highlighted the importance of criticism of kings citing Al Beruni's criticism of Mahmud's bloodshed during his conquests. He also added that the response to Sanskrit writings was not negligent as *Amir Khusrau* praises *the Panchatantra* and other Indian contributions to the world reflecting the consciousness of these indigenous traditions.

The two days marked by the presence of Dr. Audrey Truschke, left many minds creatively motivated and it also suggested that lectures such as these greatly play a role in nullification of the polarisation and harm which is done to history by restraint and faulty/selective reading of sources in order to suit a certain political agenda. An attempt at unbiased reading of History and an effort to oust the forces which seek to distort history can become an important push for academicians in direction of creating a more popularly legible history which can be understood by the common masses.

Gandhi Jayanti Celebrations

Centre for Advanced Study, Department of History, AMU, organized an event for commemorating the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on 3rd October, 2018. The event 'COMMEMORATING THE MAHATMA: RELEVANCE OF GANDHI IN TODAY'S INDIA' included an exhibition of books on/by Gandhiji which was put up in the department and certain talks which were presented on themes related to the Mahatama. 'Charkha' (Spinning wheel) and wooden slippers reminiscent of Gandhiji's Swadeshi Movement were part of the exhibition as well. Keeping the Gandhian ideals of honouring the dignity of labourers, the exhibition was inaugurated by Mr. Suresh Kumar, sweeper at the Department of History for more than a decade. The melody of hymn 'Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram' popularized by Gandhiji welcomed the audience to the event.

The event started at 10: 30 am when Prof. Ali Nadeem Rezavi, Chairman, Department of History, addressed the audience. He remarked at the importance of October as it commemorates the birth anniversaries of three great personalities; first of Mahatma Gandhi, second of the Mughal Emperor Akbar and third of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, founder of Aligarh Muslim University. Prof. Rezavi added that being the Centre for Advanced Study, it was our duty to celebrate these significant dates. He further announced that Department of History would be putting up an exhibition on the birth anniversary of Emperor Akbar, on 15th October, 2018. And later student seminars would also be organized on Sir Syed Ahmed Khan.

The first Speaker of the programme, Lubna Irfan,



Figure 1: Inauguration of the exhibition by Mr. Suresh Kumar, sweeper (safaikaramchari)



Figure 2: Exhibition of Books of /on Gandhiji and other memorabilia

Research Scholar at CAS, spoke on 'Gandhiji's Message to Students'. She discussed Gandhiji's idea of student mobilizations and protests. She added, according to Gandhiji the main aim of knowledge should not be the acquisition of wealth and possession. To seek truth should be the aim of a student. Gandhiji emphasized the active participation of students in politics and nation-building activities.

The Second Speaker, Prof. Shireen Moosvi (Department of History), discussed the importance of Gandhi in present times. She said—'It is the call of the time that we should go back to Gandhian ideals. The nation that he tried to build is being destroyed'.

She added, how the present regime has tried to put up alternatives by celebrating revolutionaries and other leaders. They are cunningly trying to 'usurp' Gandhiji through 'Swachchta', whereas the hymn 'Ishwar Allah Tero Naam' which Gandhiji admired much is being ignored.

Prof. Moosvi said in the present circumstances, our duty is to try to keep on writing the objective history and to propagate it.

History of Mahatma Gandhi and the National Movement, should be rewritten again and again through this, the aspects of living together and fighting the British together could be revisited for the present times.

Further, she emphasised that if we preach there should be communal harmony, we should practice it first.

The Third Speaker, Ms. Zainab Naqvi (M.A., History), spoke on 'Gandhiji's Views on Women'. She quoted Gandhiji, - "To me female sex is the female sex, not the weaker sex" and discussed that Gandhiji considered women superior in self control and considered them more capable for a non-violent movement.

To Gandhiji, it is the beauty of non-violence that women can have same role as men. The domestic



Figure 3: Prof. Shireen Moosvi delivering her talk

slavery of women was seen as barbarianism by Gandhiji.

The Last Speaker, Prof. Irfan Habib (Emeritus, Department of History) spoke on Gandhiji's Ideology. He said, every principle of Hind Swaraj may be abandoned but not his opposition to Communalism. Prof. Habib's emphasis was on the ideology and efforts of Gandhiji concerning communal harmony.

While referring to the name, 'Hind Swaraj' he said Gandhiji didn't use the word Bharat or Hindustan (much popular in Gujrat) but 'Hind' which is significant, for the word's Persian roots. He added, Gandhiji thought it was wrong of Hindus to oppose the concessions given to Muslims by the British, as if one's brother is getting it one should not oppose it.

Gandhiji's efforts to prevent Communal divide were also highlighted. He added that it was Gandhiji who raised the demand for releasing of Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali, whereas Muslim League did not demand it. It was pointed out that in 1917, Gandhiji insisted that Muslim League should have Maulana Muhammad Ali as president. And his 1925, Intercommunal peace fast at Dr. Ansari's House was also brought into focus. Gandhiji went to Noakhali and to Muslim villages and lived in Muslim *bastis* to protect them from Hindus. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan went to Hindu Villages to do the same. But no one from the Muslim League went to protect Muslims, let alone the Hindus.

Gandhiji tried to give every concession to Muslim League, to prevent partition, but their demands were too much. He added, the slaughter of 1947-48 in our country is second to only killing of Jews in Germany.

If Gandhiji would not have been there the killings would have been much more. When things went out of the hands he went on his perpetual fast. Bengal was saved and it escaped the mass- slaughter that took place in other parts of the country.



Figure 4: Prof. Irfan Habib elaborating on Gandhiji's ideology

On 13th January 1948 he started a fast, and demanded that Muslim refugees should be restored to their houses. And Pakistan should be paid 55 crore of rupees as compensation. Prof. Habib added the sheer irony of the fact that Indian Peasant is dealing with an acute Agrarian crisis and debt at the hands of the present regime's unfair policies and that the Peasant march to the capital was brutally dealt by police authorities on the very day of Gandhiji's

birth, a man who embodied a lifetime of support and empowerment to the farmer classes of India.

The programme was brought towards close with the playing of song detailing the life and works of the Mahatma, 'Suno Suno aye Duniya walo bapu ki ye amar kahani' sung by Mohammed Rafi dedicated to Gandhiji which was composed on his death.

Celebrating the Birth Anniversaries of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Emperor Akbar



Figure 1: Prof. Tariq Mansoor, Vice Chancellor, AMU Inaugurates the Exhibition

The Centre of Advanced Study, Department of History and Musa Dakri Museum, Aligarh Muslim University organised an exhibition along with a Symposium on 15th October, 2018, on the occasion of the birth anniversaries of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Emperor Akbar, this month. The exhibition was inaugurated by Prof. Tariq Mansoor, Vice Chancellor, AMU. Prof. Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi (Chairman and Coordinator Department of History, Coordinator Musa Dakri Museum) gave detailed description of the articles depicted in the exhibition to the guests.

The first section of the museum was dedicated to Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, displaying books on and written by him. Artefacts (excavated by Sir Syed himself) and photographs on Sir Syed's life were also

displayed. In the exhibition were also the photographs by Rana Safvi (Historian) which depicted the current condition of Sir Syed's *haveli* in Delhi. Sir Syed's letters, speeches, MAO College Documents and photographs representing the entire Aligarh Movement and the formative phase of MAO College were other displayed items. The first section also included some artefacts representing the History of Mankind.

The second portion of the exhibition was dedicated to Emperor Akbar. It represented the entire life of Akbar with the help of the medium of miniature paintings illustrating the different episodes of the life of Akbar. These included paintings ranging from the early days of the ruler's life depicting him learning and fighting, his excursions during his

Rule. There are paintings representing a Magician disguised as a Brahmin visiting the king which has been identified as Akbar's first real portrait; The punishment of Adham Khan for the murder of Atgha Khan, foster brother of Akbar; Capture of Hemu, and the defeat of his army in the Battle of Panipat, which re-established the Mughal Rule in India. The exhibition also displayed the images of the Two Medallions of Gold and silver, both of which depict Rama and Sita while the Gold one also reads Ramraj. In addition the exhibition also showcases the photographs of the sculptures and paintings at Fathpur Sikri representing Hindu Gods like Rama, Hanuman and Ganesha which establishes the religious harmony during the Reign of Akbar. The exhibition also contained the display of the material remains from Fathpur Sikri consisting of pottery shreds, animal figurines, broken – pieces of chillum and a Glass Perfume bottle. Also exhibited were the Silver and Copper coins from Akbar's period, and the replicas of the Farmans of Akbar.

The other portion exhibited the excavated remains from the sites of U. P. such as Atranjikhera, Jakhera,

Lal Quila and Sidhpur, Buland Sheher most of these artefacts were collected by R. C. Gaur during his various explorations.

Akbar and His India

Following the exhibition was a Symposium on 'Akbar and His India'. Prof. Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi (Chairman, Department of History, CAS) introduced the theme pointing at the relevance of discussing Akbar in the present times, when the Freedom of Expression is being compromised. He added that back in the 16th century, there was an Emperor who was holding 'manazras' (disputations) with people of different religions in order to reach to 'Truth'. The aspiration of whose reign was to achieve equality between all citizens /subjects and peace with all.

Emperor Akbar: The Reformer

The first speaker at the Symposium was Prof. Shireen Moosvi, who began with referring to Samrat Ashoka, the Emperor who like Akbar was a major figure who influenced the course of Indian



Figure 2: A Section of the Exhibition displaying the photographs and works related to Sir Syed Ahmad Khan



Figure 3: Guests visiting the Exhibition on the Life of Akbar

history. She said that at this critical juncture of the History of our Nation, effort must be made to understand Akbar's relevance not just as a 'king' but a reformer.

Elaborating upon Akbar's approach towards Social inequities, Prof. Moosvi dealt with the Administrative Reforms by Akbar which displayed an evolutionary process. She described how sincere thoughts towards reform came to Akbar not from nobles or people of high birth but by interacting with common masses, reference was made to several occasions when Akbar went to melas or public festivities incognito to mix with the common populace. Jharokha Darshan was also looked at in the talk as a medium through which common people petitioned the Emperor, brought him inconsequential gifts which the Emperor received with great affection. Prof. Moosvi also referred to the incident when Akbar witnessed poor people paying the Pilgrim tax and he instantly abolished it and Jizyah for one and all. Akbar's reforms in

connection to Slavery which he banned in 1562-63 were also highlighted. It is reported that by 1582 Akbar freed some of his own slaves and appeased most of them by bestowing upon them the name 'Chela' along with an allowance to be paid to them. He abolished the begar as well. Prof. Moosvi enlisted a series of reforms that Akbar gave in connection of banning Polygamy, Sati without consent, promoting late marriage for boys and girls and widow-remarriage. She further pointed at the appointment of a chandala as Akbar's Palace guard after being named as Khidmat Rai, this later became a tradition.

Prof. Moosvi further elaborated that it was these reforms and foresight of Akbar to which Prof. M. Athar Ali referred to as a 'Quasi – Constitution for State' that Akbar devised by appointing Governors, Mir Bagshis and Diwans at all levels.

Prof. Moosvi summed up by saying, Akbar was beyond a mere Emperor and was a reformer in real



Figure 4: Prof. Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi, Chairman and Coordinator of CAS, Department of History addressing the audience at the Symposium on Akbar and His India

sense, whose image was so giant in the minds of his subjects that Banarasi Das, a jain merchant, was traumatized when he heard that Emperor Akbar has passed away!

Prof. Ali Nadeem Rezavi said the exhibition of the paintings depict a number of scenes where Akbar can be seen interacting with lay people which reinforces Akbar's tolerance and inclusive approach for all.



Figure 5: Prof. Shireen Moosvi delivering her talk on 'Emperor Akbar: The Reformer'



Figure 6: Prof. Irfan Habib speaking on the topic, 'Akbar and the World of Reason'

Akbar and the World of Reason

Prof. Emeritus Irfan Habib began his talk with quoting Jawaharlal Nehru from 'Glimpses of World History' on his ideas upon primacy of Reason over faith. He said we need to visualise that the version of Islam in earlier times was much different from the present one. He said the Ma'aqulat Traditions was a Philosophy of Reason which reached here by Greek texts translated to Arabic from Cyrillic during the Abbasid Rule. One can see reason to be the base of arguments even in writings of Al Beruni, who quotes the testament and the Gita more than he does Quran. Elaborating upon this argument Prof. Habib quoted Thomas Roe who visited Emperor Jahangir saying that the mullahs of Muhammad are familiar with philosophy of Aristotle and Averroes etc, He also referred to the four Figahs of Islam prevailing during the rule of Akbar. He referred to the 1575 incident of a Brahman being accused of blasphemy by the ulama of Akbar who eventually was

executed, to which the Hanafi School replied that no non- Muslims can lawfully be persecuted for blasphemy under the Muslim kings.

Towards the latter part of the lecture Prof. Habib explained what Abul Fazl thought of Akbar and his ideas. He said that the Greek scientific influence on Abul Fazl is astonishing. Thus he doesn't assign any superiority of faith to Islam, which is also seen in Akbar's attitude of tolerance to all religions which made Father Monserrate say that 'by tolerating all religions, Akbar was negating all religions' which itself is the height of certification to Akbar's preference for Reason over religion.

Prof. Ali Nadeem Rezavi concluded the Symposium by adding that by setting up a Translation Bureau, for translation of Scriptures of different Religions, Akbar depicted the spirit of tolerance and acceptance of the other communities with Reason being the principal priority.

India's Business Class: Past and Present



Figure 1: Prof. Tariq Mansoor (Vice-Chancellor, AMU) delivering the Inaugural Address

Aligarh Historians Society and The Centre of Advanced Study, Department of History, AMU organized a two-day seminar (29th-30th December 2018) on **India's Business Class: Past and Present** at Faculty Lounge, Faculty of Arts. Academicians from across the Indian Universities are among delegates.

The Inaugural Session of this seminar was held on 29th December, 2018 in which Prof. Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi (Chairman and Coordinator of CAS, Department of History, AMU) delivered the Welcome address. Prof. Rezavi introduced the Centre of Advanced Study, Department of History and the Aligarh Historian's Society (AHS). Regarding AHS he said that it is a body which initiates the attempts towards the 'Scientific

History'and has been bringing out regular publications. Prof. Tariq Mansoor, Vice -Chancellor, AMU delivered the Inaugural Address, he highlighted the importance of History for the study of Civilisations and the fact that Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the founder of the University was himself a historian and contributed heavily to the monumental heritage of Historical structures through his book Asar-us-Sanadid. Regarding the theme of the seminar he added that the discipline of History is vast which also covers the study of Business Class, which can be read in terms of being a flexible class. He also pointed at the fact that without history we would be in a vacuum. He added that the University needs more such dedicated teachers like Prof. Shireen Moosvi, whose untiring efforts made the seminar possible on such a short

notice.

The Keynote Address was delivered by Prof. Prabhat Patnaik (Prof. Emeritus, JNU), he problematised the issues of the downfall Feudalism towards Capitalism and the opening of the Mediterranean trade and the different trajectory followed by India.

Prof. Shireen Moosvi (Secretary, Aligarh Historian's Society) extended the vote of thanks to the dignitaries for their eminent presence at AMU.

Following the Inaugural was the Academic Session, chaired by Prof. C. P. Chandrashekhar (Centre for Economic Studies, JNU).

Prof. Irfan Habib (Professor Emeritus, AMU) remarked on theme and Papers received and at the Rise of Capitalism in Modern India and a gradual departure from Socialism in terms of Economic transformation.

This was followed by the presentation of Prof. Jayati Ghosh (Centre of Economic Studies, JNU) on 'Crony Capitalism' which was a detailed study into the social hierarchies of economic development in terms of Gender, caste and ethnic groups.

The second paper was presented by Prof. Aditya Mukherjee (Centre of Historical Studies, JNU) on the topic 'Capitalism, Colonialism and Post Colonialism' which linked the Rise of National Bourgeoisie in terms of struggle against the British Colonisers and the different aspects of the economic development.

The next session was chaired by Prof. Aditya Mukherjee. First paper in this session was presented by Prof. C.P. Chandrashekhar on 'Foreign Capital and Indian Big Business' where he problematized the issues of exchange and foreign exchange crisis.

Followed by this was the presentation of Prof. Prabhat Patnaik (Professor Emeritus, Centre of Economic Studies, JNU) on 'Big Business and Neo-Liberalism', he gave an academic critique of Neo Liberal Policy which looks on the idea of an increase in GDP as development. He linked the support for GDP Nationalism to communalism and rise of fascism and a gradual opposition to Reason and Centres of Thought.

The Last Session had Prof. Utsa Patnaik (Centre of Economic Studies, JNU) chairing. Prof. K. Paddayya's (Professor Emeritus, Deccan College)



Figure 2: Prof. Prabhat Patnaik giving his Keynote address



Figure 3: Prof. Irfan Habib delivering his talk

paper themed 'Exchange in Prehistory' was presented in absentia by Prof. Irfan Habib and Prof. Ranabir Chakravarti's (Centre for Historical Studies, JNU) paper on 'Merchants in Early India' was presented by Prof. Ishrat Alam. Prof. B. P. Sahu (NEHU) presented on 'Traders in early Medieval Odisha' and Prof. Najaf Haider (JNU) presented on 'Money Changers in Mughal India'.

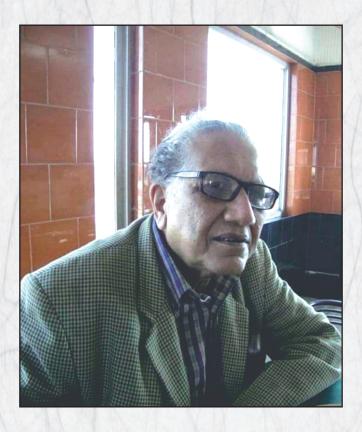
The second day of the seminar hosted a vibrant branch of papers and discussions on the theme. The Academic Session was chaired by Prof. Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi (Chairman and Coordinator, Department of History, AMU). Prof. Irfan Habib (Emeritus, Department of History, AMU) presented a paper on 'Religion and Accumulation in Mughal India' which gave an analysis into the nature of Mughal State grants to the Vrindavan temples. Prof. Ishrat Alam (Department of History, AMU) presented on, 'Indian Merchants in Indo – Persian Trade as gleaned from Dutch Records' which gave a glimpse into the presence of the Indian Merchants in the Persian trade both by land and sea routes. Prof. Shireen Moosvi (Department of History, AMU) presented on 'The Rural Moneylenders: The Dufferin Report' which gave a detailed study into the presence of bania money lenders and their role in

the Agrarian Structure as depicted in the report.

The second session was chaired by Prof. Prabhat Patnaik (Professor Emeritus, Centre of Economic Studies, JNU). Prof. Sushil Khanna (Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta) presented on 'India's Emerging Capitalist Class' which displayed the transition towards the rise of the Capitalist Bourgeoisie in post-Independence era. Prof. Surajit Mazumdar (Centre of Economic Studies and Planning, JNU) presented on 'Stunted Industrialisation and India's Big Business' which studied the nature of Indian Capitalist Class by the example of the Rise of Reliance Group.

The third session was chaired by Prof. B. P. Sahu (Education Department, North Eastern Hill University), Prof. K. L. Tuteja (Kurukshetra University) presented on 'Enterprise and Banking in Colonial Punjab' by the example of development of Punjab National Bank. The second paper was presented by Prof. Utsa Patnaik (Centre of Economic Studies, JNU) on 'Rupee- Sterling Ratio and Indian Capitalism'. The two- day seminar witnessed a healthy academic discussionsladen atmosphere with both Students and teachers participating in the discussion actively.

Mourning Professor Aniruddha Ray



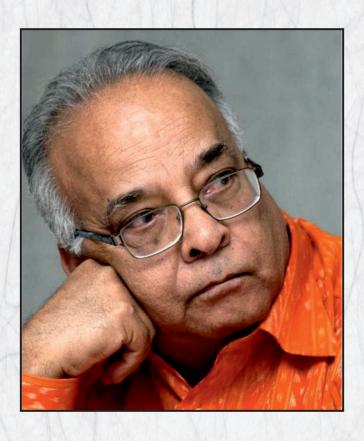
The members of the faculty and students of the Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University express their deep sense of grief at the passing away of Professor Aniruddha Ray at Kolkata.

Professor Ray was born in Calcutta in 1936 and studied at Kolkata and Paris and before retirement was Professor at the University of Calcutta. He made rich contribution to the study of Medieval and early Modern India. These included more than 230 papers and 36 books which included a standard history of the Mughal administrative

system and works on commerce, ports and political history, often with use of rich French material. Despite his growing disabilities, particularly with eye-sight he went on working. He was in older days in frequent contact with this Department which he often visited. Those who met him would always remember him as an affectionate friend, full of good humour.

Sincere condolences on behalf of the Department are expressed to members of the bereaved family.

Mourning Professor Mushirul Hasan



Aligarh had an alumnus in Professor Mushirul Hasan, in whose work and career it could justifiably take much pride. A member of the faculty of the Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, he also served as its Vice-Chancellor. Subsequently, he was appointed Director General of the National Archives of India. In both capacities he proved to be a true institution-builder. Professor Mushirul Hasan's main field was the National Movement, on various aspects of which he has left behind brilliant studies. He was well known for expressing his

thoughts freely, which is the hallmark of true scholarship. Professor Mushirul Hasan kept alive his association with Aligarh, and maintained lively contacts with members of this Department.

The Faculty and students of the Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University express their deep-felt sense of loss at Professor Mushriul Hasan's passing away and wishes that its sincere condolences be conveyed to Prof. (Mrs.) Zoya Hasan and other members of the bereaved family.

